



Section 7

Village Hub, Community Facilities and Assets



7.0 Context

7.0.01 “To promote a strong rural economy neighbourhood plans should.... promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.” NPPF para 28.

7.0.02 The two villages benefit from a large number of community facilities and assets; these are shown on Map 5, page 33. Many of the assets and land of community value are already owned or controlled by local charities, trusts or the Parish Councils (see Appendix L)

7.0.03 The Freshford Village Memorial Hall is a charitable foundation which runs the largest village hall in the community. It is used for a variety of communal, sporting and cultural events.

7.0.04 Following the closures of the Limpley Stoke and Freshford village shops, the new Galleries community shop opened in 2009 as a local enterprise owned and run by the community and staffed mainly by volunteers. It is situated in Freshford by Freshford Village Memorial Hall. In 2013 an extension was built to increase the profitable café business. The Galleries Shop serves the community and operates to ‘green’ principles such as sourcing local food and goods. It is run through the Freshford & Limpley Stoke Community Association (FLISCA) , a charity, which reinvests its profits in community projects. See <http://galleriesshop.co.uk>.

7.0.05 The Freshford Pre-school rents a room at the Freshford Village Memorial Hall and offers day care for children aged between 2½ and 5 years(up to 20 children in morning sessions and 12 in afternoon sessions.) The pre-school needs some dedicated working space

7.0.06 The Hall, the community shop and the pre-school share a location separate from the physical centres of the two villages but accessible from both. There are plans in place for possibly relocating the local GP surgery to this site. This location is recognised as forming an important village hub.

7.0.07 The Hall building is 50 years old and needs to be modernised and have additional capability added attuned to community needs now and in the future A feasibility study (see Appendix M) has been undertaken which has identified the potential for a main hall, with stage and servery from the adjacent kitchen, and supporting green room, toilets, storage etc. An upper floor at the recreational field end would include a small hall with external terrace. Separated from these by an airy atrium would be a range containing a self-contained annex for pre-school and similar usage, a committee room, and a youth space, plus potentially a relocated doctors’ surgery. Additional income could be generated by a small-business hub and gymnasium.

7.0.08 With the vision of a “community wellness centre”, space would also be available for treatment rooms for use by visiting practitioners. The package would meet modern building and sustainability standards, to provide low running costs, low maintenance requirements, and some on-site energy generation. Parking would be available for cycles and 32 cars and shared with the Galleries Community shop, as at present.

7.0.09 The project would accord with B&NES Sustainable Community Strategy and the future Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The replacement hall would be constructed substantially on the existing footprint and would not be materially larger than the existing building. Its compact design and sympathetic materials will ensure the Hall does not impinge on the sense of openness of the green belt.

7.0.10 The main hall would continue to provide space necessary for Physical Education, drama, and larger events for Freshford Primary School. Full factual evidence of the need for new facilities is being obtained to support the planning application.

7.0.11 Improvements to the footpath from Middle Stoke, and the new footpath from the school, will enhance the safety and attractiveness of pedestrian access to the village hub.

7.0.12 The Limpley Stoke Village Hall is a smaller facility providing a good meeting room, kitchen and toilet facilities but it suffers from a shortage of parking.

7.0.13 Freshford Primary School is a co-educational primary school accommodating 146 children between the ages of 4 – 11. The school suffers from

a shortage of play space and would benefit from greater access to the Tynning land for recreational activities. This is being investigated as part of the wider use of this village green.

7.0.14 The Beckington Family Practice has a branch GP surgery in Freshford in a building owned by the Younghusband Trust. The branch provides a vital service to the local community and has over 1000 registered patients. However parking is limited and disabled access to this building is deemed unsuitable. The relocation of the GP surgery from the Younghusband building to the Memorial Hall complex would address these issues and free up space which might provide useful ancillary accommodation for Freshford Primary School, which is opposite, or provide small units of affordable housing.

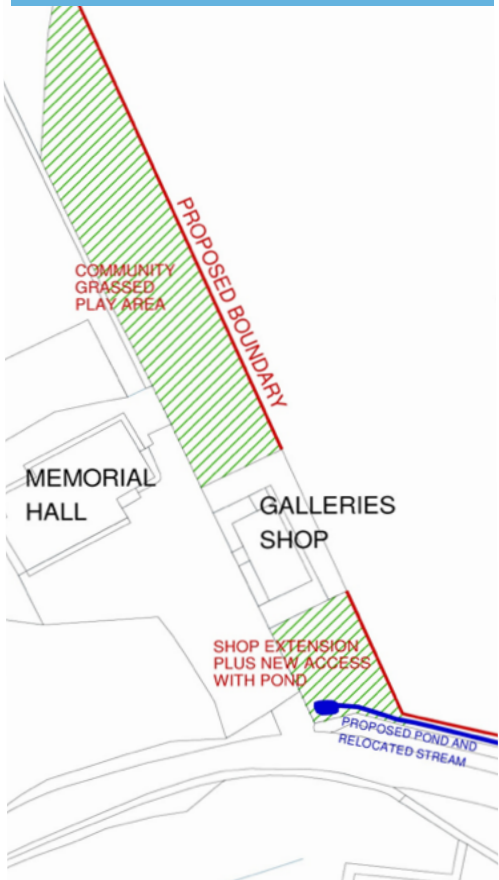
7.0.15 Privately owned assets include the two local public houses which are popular local meeting places and important historic buildings: the Hop Pole in Limpley Stoke and the Inn at Freshford are both 16th Century coaching inns. The Rose and Crown Public House and restaurant in Limpley Stoke closed in 2013 and plans for its future are uncertain. The community has expressed a strong interest in protecting the status of these local pubs (see Questionnaire results- Appendix D5).

7.0.16 St Peter’s Church in Freshford and St Mary’s Church in Limpley Stoke are both part of a United Parish of three churches which also includes St John’s in Hinton Charterhouse.

7.0.17 Freshford Railway Station serves both communities with regular rail services along the Heart of Wessex Line.



Proposed boundary changes agreed in principle with the Dawsons



7.0.18 Football and tennis are provided at Brown's Field which is owned by a sport-focused trust. These sporting facilities are used by children and adults from the community, although this land is located across the parish boundary in Hinton Charterhouse.

7.0.19 Essential utilities in the area include the water tower, sewerage works and telephone exchange.

7.1 Policy Objectives

7.1.01 To ensure that the area that includes the Galleries Shop and Café and Freshford Village Memorial Hall is recognised in the Local Plans of the two Authorities (B&NES Council and Wiltshire Council)

as the hub of the combined community and that it be brought within the Villages Settlement Areas.

7.1.02 To promote the development and/or the redevelopment of the Memorial Hall complex as integral to the health and vitality of the community. The landowners of Galleries Field have agreed in principle to release a strip of land as an additional grassed play area to be incorporated within the village hub.

7.1.03 To safeguard key facilities and assets from any adverse proposal which would result in their loss.

Community Development Policy 1

a) to define the area that includes the Freshford Village Memorial Hall, the Queen Elizabeth Playing Field, the car park and the Galleries Community Shop (see map 5, page 33) as the hub of the combined community and to bring it within the Village Settlement Area.

b) to effect the development or redevelopment of the Memorial Hall complex to provide both for existing needs and/or improved local services and facilities as a key and integral part of ensuring the future health and vitality of the community.

Community Development Policy 2

This policy identifies in Table 2 the key Assets of Community Value. There will be a presumption in favour of safeguarding them from any adverse proposal which would result in their loss.

7.2 Community Policy Rationale

7.2.01 The Policies aim to promote a strong rural economy and the retention and development of local services and community facilities. Further, the Policies seek to reflect that the Freshford Village Memorial Hall complex is regarded as the community hub and should be seen as such by the planning authorities.

7.3 Other ongoing work and actions

7.3.01 Following the expiry of existing leases to the Hop Pole and Rose & Crown pubs in Limpley Stoke, a project team has been set up by the Limpley Stoke Parish Council to work with the landlords to try and preserve these businesses which provide an important community forum as well as employment opportunities.

7.3.02 Freshford and Limpley Stoke Parish Councils intend to list the three pubs in the community (see Map 5, page 33) as Assets of Community Value with their respective Local Authorities (see Table 2, page 33).

7.3.03 To encourage both local authorities to understand that, irrespective of local authority boundaries, key neighbourhood facilities and services (see Maps 5 & 6) in both villages support the sustainability of this combined community. Support must continue to be given to projects that improve the viability and usage of these assets.

7.3.05 St Mary's Church has added a toilet and pantry and is investigating removing some pews to encourage greater use of this building by the broader community. A parallel project is under way looking at ways in which the space in St Peter's Church can be better utilised by the community.

7.3.06 The playgrounds in Freshford and Limpley Stoke are important sources of play and recreation by the children in the community and they will continue to be improved and upgraded by the respective Parish Councils.

7.3.07 Encourage the use of local facilities by publishing details on the village websites. Encourage the improved coordination between the management groups of the local facilities to maximise their use (e.g. coordinate bookings).

7.3.08 Increase community welfare by liaising with the Police and Crime Commissioners. Work with the Neighbourhood Police teams to develop a Community Watch scheme across both villages to support vulnerable residents, increase road safety and further reduce levels of criminal activity.

7.3.09 It is recommended that a study is undertaken on the feasibility of developing the unused land and buildings in Brown's Field for increased sports and recreational facilities for the children, teenage and adult residents of Freshford, Limpley Stoke and Hinton Charterhouse.

Illustrative new Memorial Hall option

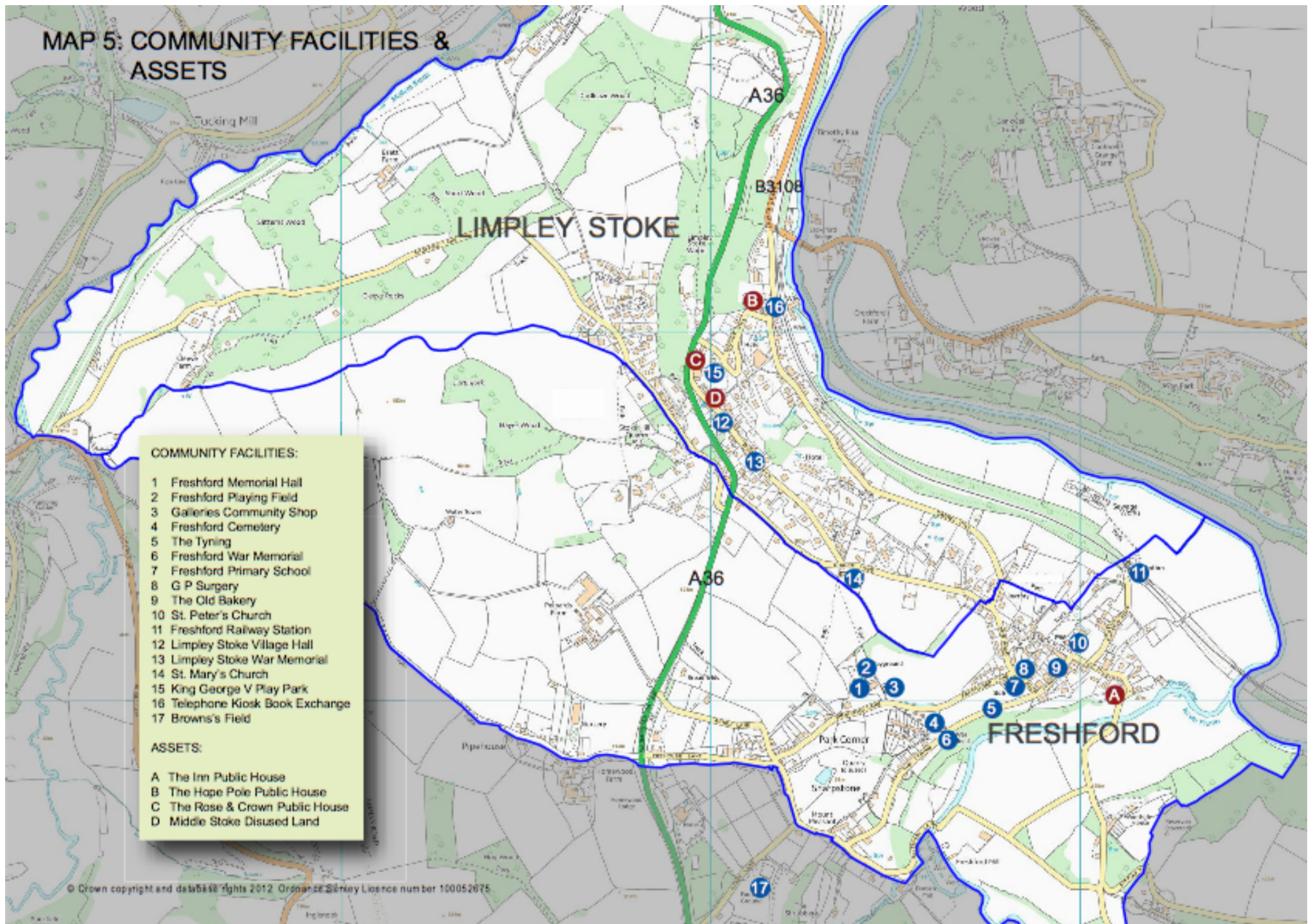


Table 1: Key neighbourhood facilities and services

Neighbourhood facility	Location	Map ref:
Freshford Village Memorial Hall	Freshford	1
Freshford Pre-School	Freshford	1
Freshford Playing Field	Freshford	2
Galleries Community Shop, Cafe and Public Toilet	Freshford	3
Cemetery	Freshford	4
The Tynning Village Green	Freshford	5
Freshford War Memorial	Freshford	6
Freshford Primary School	Freshford	7
GP Surgery	Freshford	8
The Old Bakery meeting rooms	Freshford	9
St Peter's Church	Freshford	10
Freshford Railway Station	Freshford	11
Limpley Stoke Village Hall	Limpley Stoke	12
Limpley Stoke War Memorial	Limpley Stoke	13
St Mary's Church	Limpley Stoke	14
King George Vth Play Park	Limpley Stoke	15
Telephone Kiosk Book Exchange	Limpley Stoke	16
Bus services (94 and 264/265)	n/a	n/a
"The Link" car service	n/a	n/a
Brown's Field (Hinton Charterhouse)	Hinton Charterhouse	17



MAP 5: COMMUNITY FACILITIES & ASSETS



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Table 2. Assets and Land of Community Value to register

Neighbourhood facility / land	Owner	Map Ref:
The Inn	The Roberts family	A
The Hop Pole	Wellington Pub Group	B
The Rose & Crown	Enterprise Inns	C





Business and Technology

Section 8



8.0 Context

8.0.01 20% of economically active residents work either at home or elsewhere on a self-employed basis, compared to 10% nationally. A large number of residents work from home either full or part time.

8.0.02 Whilst only 2% of economically active residents are employed in primary activities, agricultural land comprises 80% of the land area of the two parishes and a small number of farms work on and maintain the fields surrounding the community. Another important local business is the stone mine in Freshford, owned by the Bath Stone Group.

8.0.03 Tourism is an important local employer and supports a number of local businesses including the Limpley Stoke Hotel and the three village pubs. Some office space and workshops are provided at Limpley Mill and Waterhouse. The location of local businesses can be seen on Map 6, page 36.

8.0.04 The local topography results in poor mobile phone reception. The Limpley Stoke telephone exchange has been recently upgraded with fibre optic to ADSL2+. However with less efficient copper cable linking households to the exchange, broadband speeds in the community are patchy with households furthest from the exchange recording speeds of less than 2Mb.

8.1 Policy Objectives

8.1.01 To support the sustainable growth and expansion of business and enterprise in the NP Area both through the conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings.

8.1.02 To seek to promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land based rural businesses.

8.1.03 To support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in this area and which respect the character of the countryside.

8.1.04 To promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities.

8.2 Policies

There are no additional policies. The Plan supports the sustainable growth and expansion of local businesses and enterprise in the following ways:

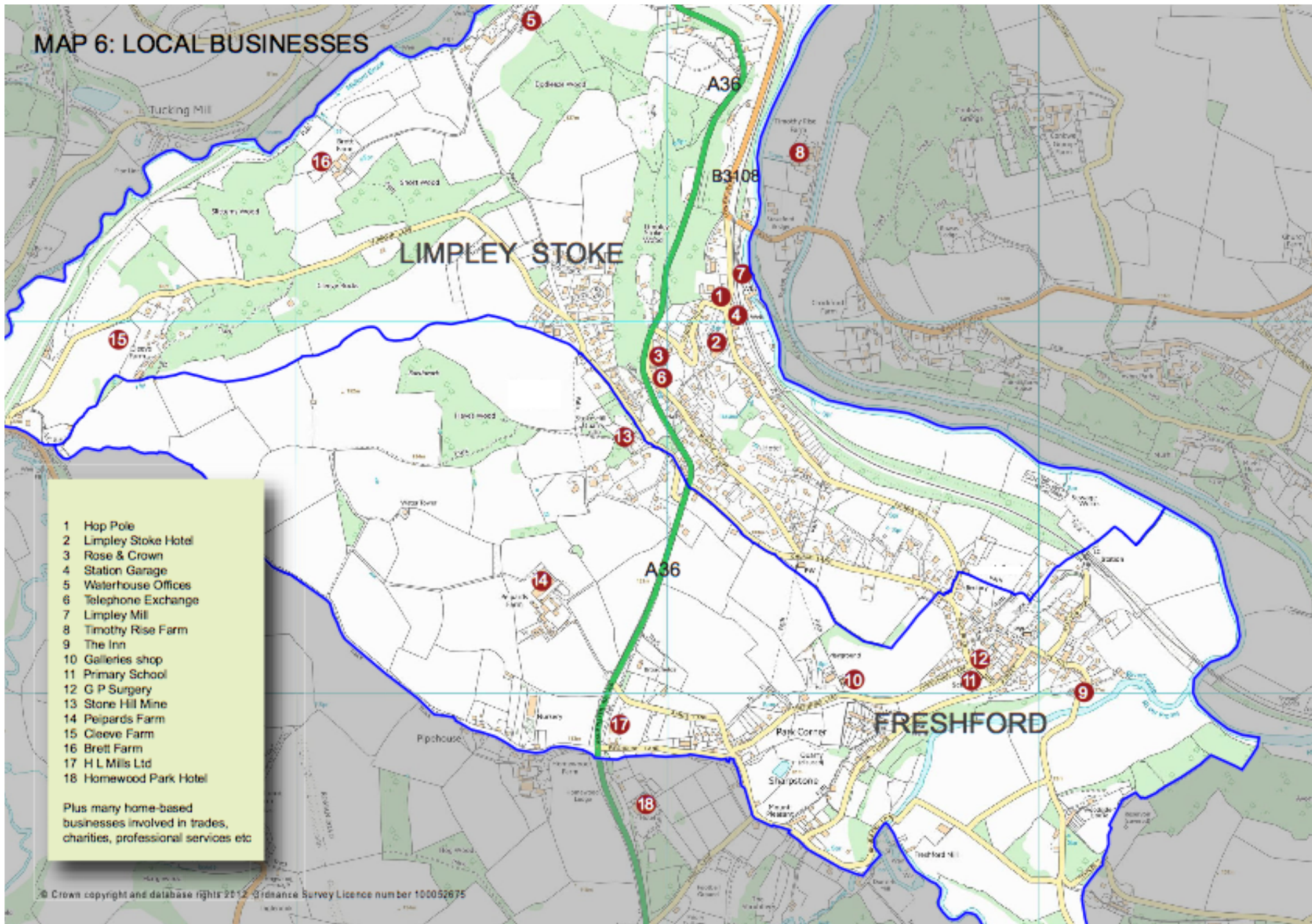
- In respect of 8.1.01, above, Planning and Development Policy, the Villages Design Statement and Housing and Affordable Housing Policies.
- In respect of 8.1.02, above, through its actions and work with local farmers and through the community Galleries Shop policy of selling locally sourced foodstuffs and goods.
- In respect of 8.1.03 and 8.1.04, above, through both its Community Development Policies, its Highways and Local Green Space Policies.

8.3 Ongoing work and actions

8.3.01 BT will be asked to prioritise the laying of fibre optic cables from the Limpley Stoke telephone exchange to local hubs which will significantly increase broadband speeds for businesses and households distant from this exchange.

8.3.02 An investigation will take place into the feasibility of deploying rural small cells which boost mobile phone signals without the need for intrusive mobile phone masts. Residents can also deploy local femtocells (small, low-power cellular base stations) to boost signals in their own houses.

MAP 6: LOCAL BUSINESSES



- 1 Hop Pole
 - 2 Limpley Stoke Hotel
 - 3 Rose & Crown
 - 4 Station Garage
 - 5 Waterhouse Offices
 - 6 Telephone Exchange
 - 7 Limpley Mill
 - 8 Timothy Rise Farm
 - 9 The Inn
 - 10 Galleries shop
 - 11 Primary School
 - 12 G P Surgery
 - 13 Stone Hill Mine
 - 14 Peipards Farm
 - 15 Cleeve Farm
 - 16 Brett Farm
 - 17 H L Mills Ltd
 - 18 Homewood Park Hotel
- Plus many home-based businesses involved in trades, charities, professional services etc

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Neighbourhood Plan Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Affordable Housing	The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines affordable housing as social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing. It is provided to meet the needs of people who cannot afford housing through the open market. Social rents are determined nationally, affordable rents are 80% of the market rent in that area, and intermediate housing allows people to part buy their home.
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	A formally assigned zone where planning control is based on the protection and enhancement of the natural beauty of the area.
Brownfield Land	Land that has been previously developed on (excluding agricultural or forestry buildings and gardens). E.g. Freshford Mill.
Biodiversity	The degree of variation of life forms within a particular ecosystem. Biodiversity is the measure of the health of the ecosystem.
Community	A group of people who hold something in common. They could share a common place (e.g. individual neighbourhood), a common interest (e.g. interest in environment) a common identity (e.g. age) or common need (e.g. particular service focus).
Community facilities	Land and buildings used to help meet social, health and education needs for everyone in the community.
Community Right to Bid	Aims to give community groups the time to develop bids and raise money to buy public assets that come on the open market.
Conservation Area	An area selected under Section 69 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as being of 'special architectural or historical interest' the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance.
Core Strategy	The Core Strategy is the main part of a local authority's Local Plan. It should set out the vision, spatial strategy and core policies for the spatial development of the area.
Environmental Impact assessment	A procedure to be followed for certain types of project to ensure decisions are made in full knowledge of any likely significant effects on the environment.
Flood Plain	An area prone to flooding.
Front Runners	A mix of urban and rural communities, selected and sponsored by government, that are spearheading Neighbourhood Planning.

Term	Definition
Green Belt	Green Belt is a defined area of countryside around a town or city which is protected from 'inappropriate' forms of development – as defined in government planning policy on Green Belts. They aim to stop urban sprawl and the merging of settlements, preserve the character of historic towns and encourage development to take place within existing built-up areas.
Greenfield site	Land that has not previously been used for urban development. It is usually land last used for agriculture and located next to or outside existing built-up areas of a settlement.
Habitat Regulations Assessment	<p>A Habitat Regulations Assessment is the assessment of the impacts of implementing a plan or policy on international protected sites for nature conservation. These sites are Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for birds identified under the Birds Directive and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) for habitats and species under the Habitats Directive. Ramsar sites (wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention) are also considered under the assessment, as are candidate SACs and proposed SPAs.</p> <p>The purpose of a Habitat Regulations Assessment is to ensure that plans will not result in significant damage to protected wildlife sites. The assessment considers the impacts of a land use plan against conservation objectives of the site and identifies whether it would adversely affect the integrity of the site. Where significant negative effects are identified, alternative options should be examined to avoid any potential damaging effects.</p>
Highways Agency	An executive agency of the Department for Transport, responsible for the construction, maintenance and management of the trunk road and motorway network.
Infill	Infill is the filling of a gap normally capable of taking no more than two houses. Infill development must be consistent with the policies set out in the Plan and preserve the openness of the Green Belt.
Inspector	Someone employed by the Planning Inspectorate, an independent agency of Government appointed by the Secretary of State to preside over inquiries into development plans and rule on planning appeals.
Local Authority	An umbrella term for the administrative body that governs local services such as education, housing and social services.
Local Plan	The Local Plan identifies where future development should take place to meet local needs for homes, businesses, shops and other services, plus the infrastructure to support them. It also decides which areas should be protected from development because they are important to local people or have environmental or heritage qualities that should be conserved.

Term	Definition
Localism Act 2011	This Act includes wide-ranging changes to local government, housing and planning. Significantly, the Act abolished regional planning, and introduced the possibility of Neighbourhood Plans as part of the development plan.
Local Referendum	A direct vote in which communities will be asked to either accept or reject a particular proposal or plan.
Neighbourhood Plan	Neighbourhood Plans sometimes called Neighbourhood Development Plans, were introduced by the Localism Act 2011. Communities are able to prepare neighbourhood planning policy documents, outlining how they envisage their area developing in the future.
Parish Plan	Community led plans, which contain a wide range of community issues and aspirations.
Permitted Development Rights	Rights to carry out certain limited forms of development without the need to make an application for planning permission, as granted under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995.
Renewable and low carbon energy	Includes energy for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, from the sun and also from biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels).
Rural Exceptions sites	Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. Small numbers of market homes may be allowed at the local authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.
Scoping Report	The process of working out the issues, environmental impacts, alternatives and depth of investigation which an environmental impact assessment or strategic environmental assessment should go into.
Sustainability Appraisal	Sustainability Appraisal assesses the economic, environmental and social impacts of a proposed policy or plan, to ensure that it would contribute to achieving sustainable development.
Sustainable Development	Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is central to the economic, environmental and social success of the country and is the core principle underpinning planning. Simply stated, the principle recognises the importance of ensuring that all people should be able to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, both now and in the future.
Village Settlement	Boundaries on a map, usually set out in the local development plan, beyond which the local planning authority proposes that a village should not be allowed to extend.
Village Green	This is a open space usually within a settlement upon which the local community have an absolute right of access and to use for leisure purposes.

MAP 1: NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA

